

## *The Mask of Priam*



*Not far from modern Istanbul, there lies  
Upon the blue Aegean's Western shore,  
A place where ancient heroes' battle cries  
Resounded in a struggle for the whore  
That we call Helen. Give me your breath  
O Muse, that I might paint Troy's savage death.*

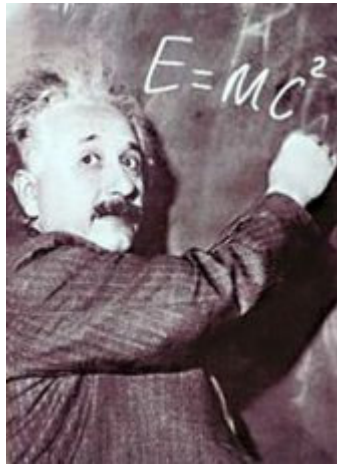
*The modern hill of Hissarlik was once  
Home to Priam and his noble sons. Great  
Ilium mounted its ordained defense,  
Despite the evil auguries of fate  
And clear fault of Paris in his lust  
For Helen (whom no man could ever trust.)*

*Agamemnon and his brother Kings  
(Outraged and set upon their swift revenge),  
Sailed out from Greece as if with eagle wings  
And each man seemed alone: without a friend.  
Achaean ships at last crashed on the shore;  
And men and Gods made ready for a war.*

***Achilles slew great Hector and at last  
A ruse by wily Ulysses condemned  
The Trojans to their own heroic past  
And poets to their lays of Troy's swift end.  
The Greeks killed almost everyone they found  
(Some sleeping in their beds) without a sound.***

***After the annihilation was complete  
Great Agamemnon ordered that a mask  
Be taken of dead Priam in defeat  
And made from beaten gold: a simple task  
Enough: yet though they finished it by noon,  
The Mask of Priam vanished with the moon!***

## ***Einstein on a Beam of Light***



***Einstein on a beam of light  
Deduced the Cosmos in his head;  
Gerald on a boozy night  
Fucked a student in his bed.***

***Wittgenstein broke all his words  
Delivering his notebooks up.  
Gerald just passed out his turds;  
Then motored off to feed and sup.***

***Galileo scanned the stars  
With his new fangled telescope;  
Gerald merely bears the scars  
Of killing those who cannot cope.***

***The Prof. produced a book last June,  
Called it "Pound and Metaphor";  
Made good sense of a baboon  
(Which hadn't been explained before.)***

***They say that Gerald, when he's pissed,  
Will show his penis for a pound.  
He's on the New Year's Honour's List!  
(Sir Gerald has a pleasing sound!)***

## ***The Twilight Zone***



***Ludwig Wittgenstein believed  
The world was all that was the case:  
A multiplicity conceived  
Of facts (which made the human race!)***

***Thoughts were vital propositions,  
Statements with a gist of sense:  
"Truth functions" of an erudition  
Simply complex—briefly dense!***

***"The case" was all the facts, not things:  
Logical pictures were the thoughts;  
The propositional function brings,  
A photo of Grable in white shorts!***

***Beyond sweet Betty's pretty legs,  
There lies a realm of mystic forms.  
(The world is where one whines and begs  
Within "the case's" modes and norms!)***

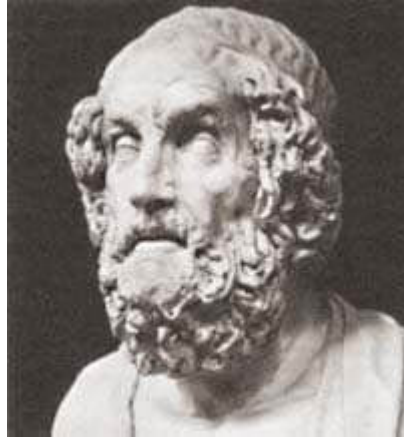
***Take me to that land of silence,  
Where the mystic truths are known.  
Let me suddenly—at once,  
Experience the "twilight zone"!***

## ***Travelling through the Sun-lit Cyclades***



***Travelling through the sun-lit Cyclades  
I thought about romances from the past,  
Of mighty Ulysses strapped to the mast,  
Of siren lovers: Priam on his knees  
Cursing Paris for that strange and vast  
Emotion men call love: one only sees  
That certain things were sure from first to last.  
What is it in a single woman's eyes,  
Or nose, or mouth, or lips, or snow-white breast,  
That make men lose their reason and at once,  
Begin to slowly plot and to devise,  
Schemes and affairs that put love to the test,  
Until the world itself has no defence?***

## ***Homer***



***What is it in a simple tale of romance  
That makes each man a fascinated child?  
Is it by iron fate or merest chance,  
That we like tales of violence hot and wild?  
Why do I love of all legends the best  
Great Homer's saga of the warring West?***

***"Homer!" The very name rings like a bell  
Down all the centuries of Western art!  
Great Ulysses was forced to visit Hell  
And know his mother's lost and broken heart!  
It is the archetypes that fascinate  
Us most (a gritty courage, Love and Hate!)***



## **Ave Syd**

Syd Barrett  
1946-2006



*Was incipient madness always there?  
Or was the startling suddenness of fame  
Too much for one of temperament so rare  
And fine? I Guess it's difficult to blame  
Any of the band too much. The crazy eyes  
Were always fixed upon them in disguise.*

*Those early videos of black and white  
Presaged an odd rejection of the real;  
As if some stricken soul had taken fright  
And hidden in a lunatic's surreal  
World...Ave Syd! I think you were relieved  
When finally you had to leave the field.*

## ***The Death of Gerard Manley Hopkins***



***"His mind runs in eccentric ways"  
(Its wonders to perform)  
The Bishop thought: "He's in a daze  
Of stressed and instressed form."***

***He passed away in old Kildare,  
As "happy" as could be.  
At least it seemed he didn't care  
For death (that set him free).***

***A private man, a public priest,  
A living question mark;  
Did he slay the inner beast,  
Howling in the dark?***

***What were his thoughts on that last day  
Devoted to the Son?  
Did all his words just fade away  
In silence, one by one?***

***And Did Those Feet in Ancient Times***



***And did those feet in ancient times  
Walk upon Kashmir's rolling hills?  
And did some Brahmin from the jungle climes  
Instruct Him in the Vedic skills?***

***And did Neil Armstrong really tread,  
Upon the rocky, lunar face?  
And were those famous words, famously read  
Upon the moon, or in some other place?***

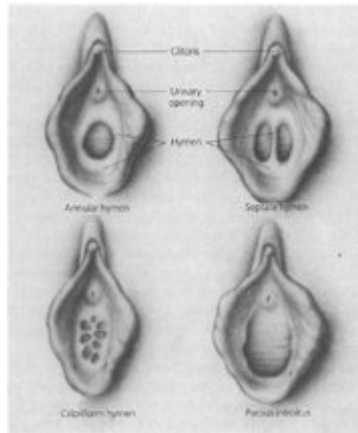
***Within some secret basement room  
Were pictures cunningly contrived  
To seem as if men walked upon the moon  
(Who jumped and hopped and leapt and dived?)***

***Who was the author of "Macbeth"?  
Did Francis Bacon bear the pen?  
Or was it through Kit Marlowe's life-in-death  
That "Will" became the pseudonym?***

*Who said the earth was really round?  
How can we know it isn't flat?  
Have Darwin's cogitations really found  
That man's a mammal? (like a rat!)*

*Did Einstein truly conquer time  
And space (through relativity?)  
Or was such hybris deemed a fatal crime  
Against our primitive ennui?*

## ***Billy Was a Six-Gun Kid***



***Billy was a six-gun kid;  
Scared the law to death,  
When he rode up, sheriffs hid:  
Or else drew their last breath.***

***Delia is much like that;  
Her ammunition belt,  
Is loaded with a broken twat;  
Though child-birth she's not felt.***

***Her slugs are shot from blue-green eyes;  
Her effluence is rank.  
You think she's trapped: Surprise! Surprise!  
She's busted in your bank!***

***Sweet Delia's a mean machine  
(At only twenty-one!)  
She's beautiful and very lean,  
Yet poof! Bang! Bang! You're gone!***

## ***The Next Creation***



***A million times more massive than the sun,  
Those stars that lit the early vacant space;  
Will mathematics yet deduce the one  
Who shaped the Cosmos and the human race?***

***Religions still relate their ancient tales  
Of "Adam", "Eve", "The Ark" and other "signs",  
But finally the telescope unveils  
The truth of God's intelligent designs.***

***And where you there when the big bang blew out,  
From tiny atoms crunched within a ball?  
And can you really have the slightest doubt,  
That the Creator's plan includes us all?***

***Some day the whirling atoms will collapse,  
Into the darkness of some micro-space;  
And in that momemt God will think, perhaps,  
Of something higher than your smiling face.***

## ***Icons Can't Be Laid***



***Getting laid in tinsel town  
Is prerequisite,  
For those who wish to wear a crown  
And on a throne to sit.***

***Marilyn was often juiced,  
Before she reached the top;  
And even Hepburn was well goosed  
Before they had to stop.***

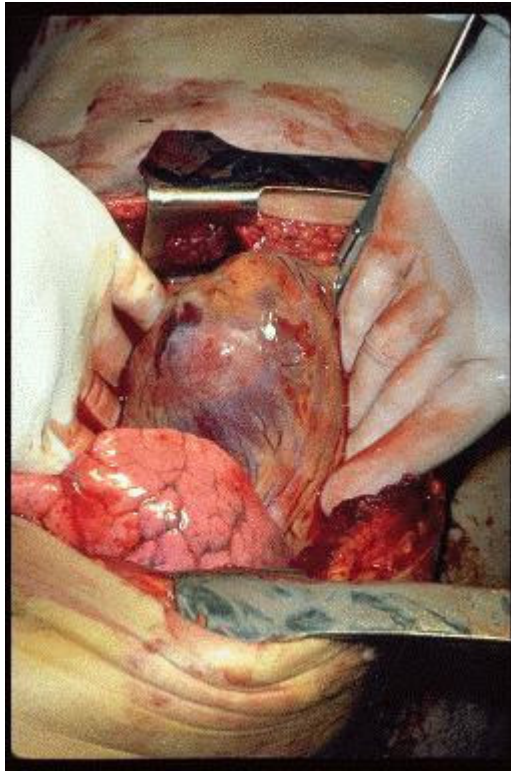


***"You scratch my back, I scratch yours,"  
Was all you heard them say;  
(Producer's and director's scores,  
Updated every day!)***

***Yet in the film, they seemed so chaste,  
Those icons of the screen;  
All sweeping gowns and breasts well laced  
And manners most serene.***

***Well, well...it seems that all was not  
As fantasy portrayed.  
(It's true most of us like it hot,  
But icons can't be laid!)***

## *The Open Heart*



*At twenty-one, I loved you  
More than I will say.  
At thirty-one I seemed to  
Be dying every day.*

*Tracked you down in Rome's back streets,  
Desperate for a glance;  
Trapped you out where Tiber meets  
The Bacchanalian dance.*

*Somewhere down in old Marseilles,  
We had it all to do:  
Couldn't quite explain a way  
Two lovers could get through.*

***Finally, in Winchester,  
We blew it all apart:  
(As hidden passions fester,  
So does the open heart!)***

## ***J'd Been Waiting for Twenty Years***



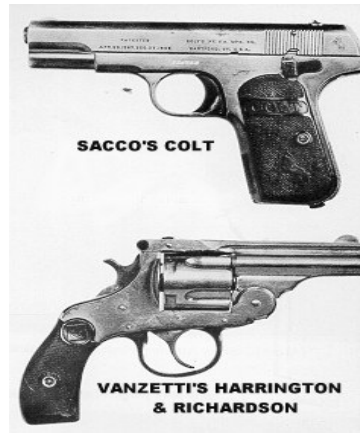
***J'd been waiting for twenty years,  
For someone to dole me the stuff;  
Avoiding the yellow faced leers  
Of those who had suffered enough.***

***Last night I thought that I'd caught one;  
Expensive and kind of a snitch.  
His face was the face of a sour John  
And his wife was a dirty old bitch.***

***In his eyes I could trace all the panic,  
Of poorly lit streets in the Mall.  
He certainly seemed to be manic,  
As he let out his lupernine call.***

***I never took him for nothing.  
Disappointment was all that I got.  
And all of the street lights were flashing  
Just to light up his globules of snot.***

## ***Necessary Objects***



***Necessary objects, one:  
Go and get yourself a gun.  
Necessary objects, two:  
Find a woman who'll stay true.  
Necessary objects, three:  
Each day drink the greenest tea!  
Necessary objects, four:  
A man can't live without a whore.  
Necessary objects, five:  
Eat food and you'll stay alive.  
Necessary objects, six:  
Lots of dollars make you rich.  
Necessary objects, seven:  
Don't forget to pray for Heaven.  
Necessary objects, eight:  
Know the rules of love and hate.  
Necessary objects, nine:  
A bottle of the reddest wine!  
Necessary objects, ten:  
Avoid the traps of stupid men.  
(Meditate each day and then,  
Count your blessings one to ten!)***

## ***God Made Eve from Rib of Adam***



***God made Eve from rib of Adam,  
In the likeness of Himself;  
Hoping she'd help out in a jam,  
Through divinely sponsored stealth.***

***But she grew from day to day,  
In attitude and influence;  
Until, at length, God had to say,  
That He'd shown little common sense!***

***"Woman's now the crux of all things:  
Gossip, slave and Master too.  
Satan's smile nor diamond rings,  
Can bring her to his point of view!"***

***With these words, God departed hence  
And left man to his woman-kind:  
Planning things, Sublime, Immense:  
Out of sight and out of mind!***

## *Dislocating Language*



*Dislocating language  
(Whatever that may mean)  
Isn't like a game of bridge,  
Nor belting out a scream.*

*It isn't breaking bones  
(Exquisitely refined!)  
Nor is it feeding food to crones  
(Stone deaf and—worse—stone blind).*

*It is a kind of babble,  
Loved by one and all;  
A teeny bit like scrabble,  
(But nothing like football.)*

*Giving words their meanings  
(For now and evermore?)  
Teasing out their gleanings,  
And far-flung metaphors!*

## ***Poem on Edmund Spenser***



***Spenser died from "lack of bread"  
In fifteen-ninety-nine,  
At only forty-seven, which  
Was really still his prime.***

***In better times, he'd earned a name  
In Ireland's reconquest;  
And taken land and castles there  
(From moderate to the best.)***

***Spenser wrote a pamphlet on  
Irish history;  
(Or at least upon the end of it  
Through English savagery!)***

***He advocated that the men  
Of England should efface  
The Irishness of Ireland  
(Leaving not a trace!)***



***Starve them! Burn them! Kill them all!  
Was all the plan he had;  
So when rebellion stalked the land,  
Like Lear he went mad.***

***With Raleigh, he escaped the noose  
The Irish had prepared;  
But sailing off to England he  
Had secretly despaired.***

***And so, the master poet who  
Had deified the Queen,  
Died in squalid misery  
Upon the London scene.***

***His funeral was a state affair  
In which the nation grieved.  
(And his repatriated bones  
By Chancer's were interred.)***

***It is a thought to make us pause,  
How Spenser's erudite  
Poems (in imperial ways)  
Justified a fight.***

***The Irish are not perfect men,  
The English are not bad;  
Humanity is all the same!  
(Vicious! Power mad!)***

## ***This Is Death***



***Strip away the layers of the brain  
Let the eyes go out  
And all the whispering noises cease  
This is death  
A falling away from everything you knew  
Or will ever know  
Ceasing to exist before you ever found out  
Why you came  
Or mattered  
To someone—no one  
This is death  
I'll say it again  
Let the neurons be extinguished in the brain  
This is death***

## ***All Our Banners Were Unfurled***



***Shankly was a legend;  
That's all that I will say,  
While others, wasting words, contend  
Forever and a day.***

***Shankly, Paisley, Fagan too  
Are masters of our fate;  
Before—right now: the future's new  
As legends have no date.***

***So sing a song for Shankly boys,  
And sing a song for Bob.  
They knew a thing or two that Moyes  
And blue noses can't rob.***

***LFC replaced the world  
We failed to change around;  
And all our banners were unfurled  
For honour in the ground.***

***Don't Fall in Love with an Arab***



***Don't fall in love with an Arab,  
With cavernous, coal-black eyes  
(Unless you want to be gutted,  
And hung up as her prize.)***

***Whatever you do, don't tell her  
That she's the only one,  
Or you'll wind up on the mobile  
Praying she's not gone.***

***Don't fall in love with an Arab,  
It just isn't worth the pain;  
For weeks and months and years  
She'll screw you again and again.***

***Don't believe the lies of an Arab,  
When she opens her sweet mouth;  
You might think that you're heading north,  
But really you're going south.***

***Don't speak of love to an Arab,  
It's something she can't feel;  
She wants to be possessed and bought  
By someone who's not real.***

***Don't fall in love with an Arab,  
I pity you if you do:  
That sexy little Moslem doll  
Will make a mess of you!***

***See the following websites for information on Jon Aristides***

***[www.jon-aristides.net/](http://www.jon-aristides.net/)***

***[www.maskofpriam.com](http://www.maskofpriam.com)***

***[www.bewrite.net/authors/jon\\_aristides.htm](http://www.bewrite.net/authors/jon_aristides.htm)***

***<http://ulyssesonithaca.blogspot.com/>***

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